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Noted By
1/29/54

28 January 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Notes on NSC Meeting, 28 January 1954

1. Discussion of Dispersal -- presented by Mr. Flemming.

Ultimate upshot: to study dispersal problem of one agency -- Defense first -- in all its aspects, including establishment of nuclei of take-over groups outside Washington area, i.e., beyond 20 miles from District. Successive stages in working out test case planning to be presented for 10 minutes at NSC meetings from now on as often as necessary. President asked for list of essential services to be dispersed. Recommendation made that Budget and agencies get together for funds for carrying on dispersal program.

Sidelights: President much concerned over succession regulation -- feels Truman's changes were political gesture -- essential that succession should be kept within the Cabinet-NSC group who have been long associated in policy planning -- dislikes idea of succession to Speaker of House and President pro-tem of Senate before it comes back to Secretary of State. Asked Nixon to dig up the law. Returned several times to this point.

- President suggested use of helicopters stationed on roofs of key government buildings and kept in shape at all times for evacuation of top government officials in event roads out of Washington are blocked as they most likely would be.

- Diametrical opposition between Sec/Def and Peterson on extent of threat -- particularly from guided missiles -- in next 5-10 years.

- Decision nearly taken to stop any further government building in target areas. DCI interposed human problem of getting personnel to move to remote areas to work in government agencies to be housed outside of target areas.

2. Brief discussion of port security; necessity to maintain alert security guard on important munitions shipments.

3. Discussion of Peterson's plan for air-raid exercise to involve Civil Defense officials in U.S., Territories, and Canada. Had come to NSC for approval in light of possibility that such an exercise, 6-9 months from now, might lead to public fear that attack was imminent or might provide Soviets with propaganda springboard. Decided to go ahead with plan for exercise but with urgings that publicity be handled carefully to avoid panicking the people. Reference made to future drills to involve

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evacuation of some cities for 48 hours, full medical, rescue and food drills, etc. President declared Civil Defense useless unless paper planning were put to practical tests yearly.

4. DCI's Briefing:

- Burma -- Described map. Communist plans to intensify guerrilla warfare -- other insurgencies -- reference to rice crisis from oversupply as new bumper crop is added to '53 carry-over situation resulting from overpricing by Burmese government. Discussion of prices and need to cut 40%. Stassen referred to FOA help in getting some purchase contracts from India and Japan for some of new crop. DCI covered importance of rice revenue as underpinning social welfare plans -- unrest likely soon.

- Malaya -- Reference to Eden's expression of concern over deterioration of situation; our initial surprise at this; recent reports referring to captured plans of terrorists to increase violence -- shift also to subtle infiltration.

- Indochina -- Little new to report. Viet Minh cutting Seno-Quang-Tri road -- French landing at Tuy Hoa in strength. Viet Minh had had several days' forewarning and had withdrawn. Viet Minh seem able to get knowledge of French plans -- delayed opening of Viet Minh attack on Dien Bien Phu -- 30 Viet Minh Battalions to 15 French. Reference to improved food build-up there as part of general supply build-up of 200 tons a day with consumption at 83 tons a day.

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- ChiNat Offshore Islands -- Described map showing strengths and locations of both ChiNats and ChiComs. ChiNat regulars 2/3 of the total on the offshore islands. No sign that ChiComs making preparations to attack Chinmen or the other islands, but they could do so without much prior warning.

No briefing on Spanish Morocco situation.

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